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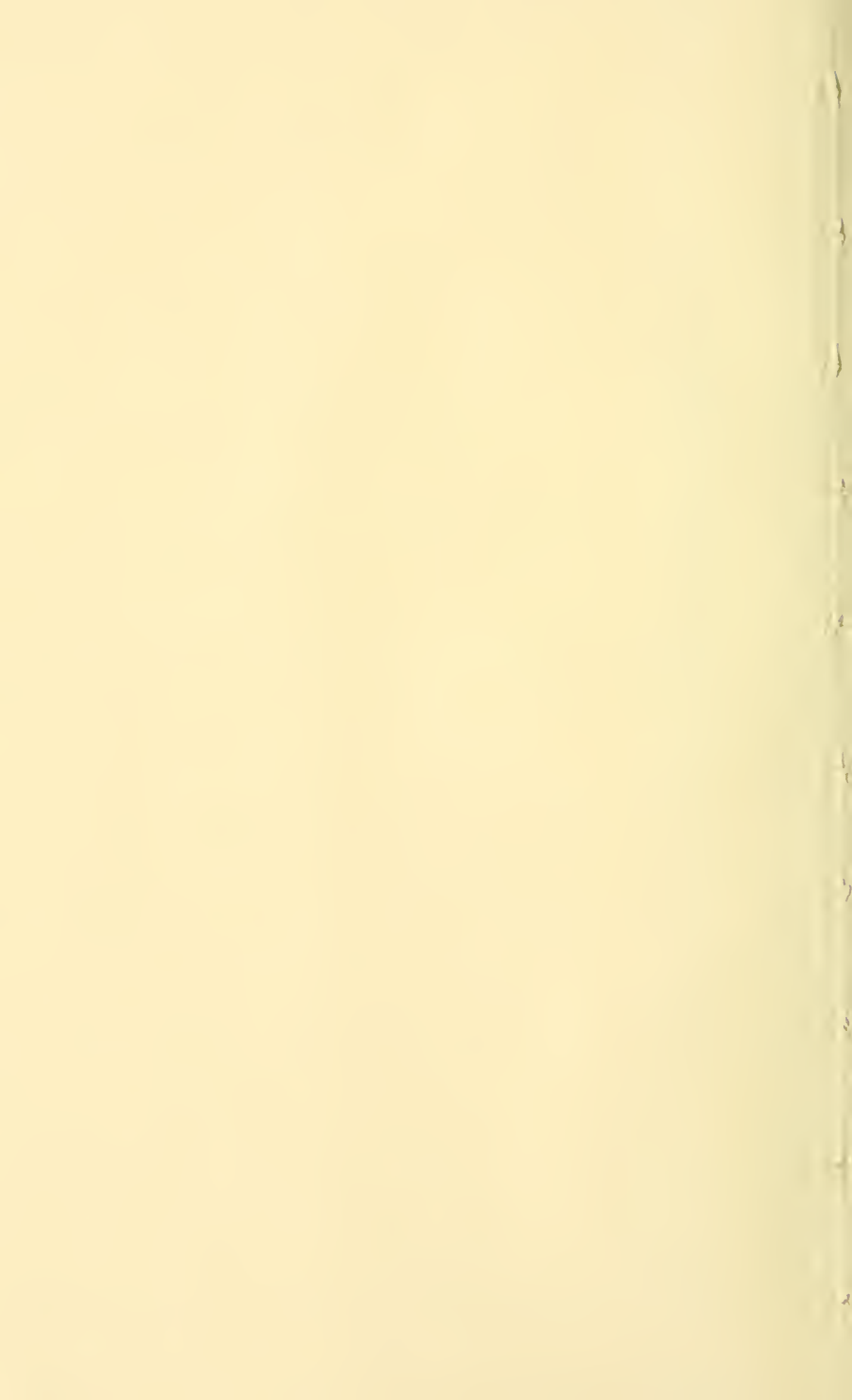


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AN ADDRESS

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BY

Hon. I. C. PARKER,

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ADDRESS.

Proclaim Liberty throughout all the land, and unto all the inhabitants thereof.—Lev. xxv.—10.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN :

WE read that after the children of Israel had escaped from the most galling bondage in Egypt, and after the Lord of hosts had triumphed gloriously over those who despised the sentiment "that all men are created free and equal," and the horse and rider had been thrown into the sea, and after right had prevailed over might in the very morning of the world, and those who had escaped from the thralldom of the Egyptian task masters had sung their songs of joy on the banks of their deliverance, the great law giver Moses received from the Deity, not only that higher law upon which is based the Christian's faith, but also that code which all civilized nations have directly, or indirectly recognized as the one by which the world can be governed. It was then that the command which I have read to you, came pure and spotless from the mouth of God himself, when he spoke to Moses from amidst the fire and smoke and awful thunders of Sinai, commanding him to "hallow the fiftieth year and proclaim liberty throughout all the land, and unto all the inhabitants thereof."

We in this age of the world fully recognise the fact that the principle of this command has its seat and center in the mind of the Deity, and its mission is the harmony of the universe, and because it became known of men as being the

will of God, you and I, together with the people of this whole land, in obedience to what has become a time honored custom, not only here but wherever may be found Americans, and wherever floats the flag of the free, and also in obedience to a sense of patriotic duty, quit the field and the anvil, the workshop and the counter, the busy marts of commerce and the flaming forge, the noise and bustle and heat of the city, as well as the quiet of the country home, to assemble around the altars of American liberty, and place thereon the oblations of our faith in "a government of the people, by the people and for the people," pledging our troth anew to those eternal rights of man proclaimed by the fathers, when they ninety-five years ago to-day hurled in the very face of despotism the immortal declaration: "We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure those rights governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed."

We have often been told that history repeats itself; and I was forcibly struck with the truth of this, when a few weeks ago I stood within the walls of Independence Hall, in Philadelphia, and gazed upon the old liberty bell, now preserved within that sacred temple of American liberty as a priceless national heirloom. It will be remembered that the Continental Congress, during the time of its deliberations upon the Declaration which has been read to you to-day, sat with closed doors. It had been engaged several days in the discussion of this measure, which they of that day believed if adopted would change the fate of a continent, and which we now believe will in time revolutionize the world. On the night of the third of July, 1776, it was noised abroad in the city of Philadelphia that on the morning of the fourth of July the final action of Congress would be taken on the Declaration. Thousands of anxious people had assembled in the street and public square in front of the hall. All hearts in that assembly and through-

out the colonies, were throbbing with anxiety. All minds were intent upon one thought: "What would Congress do?" was passed from lip to lip, of that immense throng. The old bellman was at his post in the belfry. A little boy had been placed beneath him to give him the signal when to ring. The morning sun was shining brightly. The assembled throng looked upon it as a good omen, being symbolic of the new risen sun of independence even then discernable in the political heavens. The morning wore on apace. Finally the Declaration was adopted, and the little boy was seen to clap his hands and heard by the multitude below to shout at the top of his voice to the old bellman, "ring! ring! ring!" The old man did ring, and a nation was born, and the birthday of that nation we all over this land, from where the morning sun first kisses the blue waves of the Atlantic to where he sinks to rest beneath the silvery waters of the Pacific, this day celebrate. The old man did ring, and when he did so, he rang out the death knell of despotism and human slavery, and rang in the new era wherein liberty to all the people was to be the rule, and oppression the exception. The old man did ring, and the clear notes of that bell were sweet music to the ears of the patriot fathers assembled below, who stood ready to pledge their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor, as those within its hallowed walls had already done, to maintain the eternal rights of man. The ringing of that bell carried glad tidings of great joy to the colonists who were in arms every where, and as its sweet notes were borne across the fertile slopes of the old Keystone state, the people caught the sound and rejoiced; and as they heard its ringing tones wafted upon the breeze down in the beautiful valleys of Virginia, her patriot sons and daughters met its notes with shouts of rejoicing; and the sound of that ringing was greeted with the cheers of those in the old Bay state, who had seen Warren give up his young life as a Holocaust to liberty at Bunker Hill; and those who had seen the sons of free America butchered by the minions of despotism at Lexington; and they were heard amid the swamps

of the Carolinas, there increasing the patriotic devotion of Sumpter's and Marion's men; and we can almost imagine that this proclamation of liberty as it was borne upon the wings of the wind was caught up by the angels of heaven, and as it mingled with their sweet songs of rejoicing, was carried back to the throne of that God, who, thousands of years before, had said, upon a mountain top, standing out upon the sands of the desert of Arabia: "Proclaim liberty throughout all the land, and unto all the inhabitants thereof."

This old bell has a history. It was imported from England in 1752, for the state house of Pennsylvania, but having met with some accident in the trial ringing, after it was landed, it lost its tone, and had to be re-cast. This was done under the direction of Isaac Norris, Esq., then speaker of the Colonial Assembly. This was twenty-three years before it proclaimed to the people of America the Declaration of Independence; and strange as it may seem, at this time was placed upon it the remarkable motto so prophetic of its future use, "Proclaim liberty throughout all the land, and unto all the inhabitants thereof." This declaration or command which emanated from God, was carried by the flight of time down through the ages until it was caught up and placed in letters of iron, thereby indicating its strength and power over the minds of the children of men, upon the old bell, which will stand as a monument to liberty as lasting as time, and as eternal as the everlasting hills. Truly, history does repeat itself. This bell became useless after it had done its work of telling the people of the colonies, and through them the nations of the earth, that a new nation had been born among them, and was already knocking at the doors of despotism for recognition—a nation whose children were free. It had one mission to perform, and when that was done its work was accomplished. It was then to be placed with the sword of Washington, the staff of Franklin, and the pen of Jefferson, and the bullet-torn and blood-stained battle-flags of the nation, all sacred archives of a government whose every citizen is a peer of his fellow.

No British forge was pure enough to send forth metal that would sound the key note to American Liberty ; therefore the bell had to be re-cast in this country. The soil of Briton was so cursed by the tread of despotism that no British mine could send forth from its bowels ore sufficiently pure to make a bell that would ring out the chime of " Liberty and Union, one and forever inseparable," therefore it had to be purified in a furnace the fires of which were lit up by the hands of men who would be free. No British workmen sufficiently understand the principles of Liberty, to make the tongue of that bell, therefore it had to be modeled by the strong right arm of an American Freeman. When we consider all of these things, and that this motto was placed upon it twenty-three years before it was destined to obey the command of Him, who doeth all things well, by proclaiming liberty throughout all the land, and unto all the inhabitants thereof, and long before any one in the Colonies had even dreamed of Independence, we can truly say that he who does not recognize the finger of God in this work, must most certainly be forgetful of the fact that he alone holds in the hollow of his hand the destiny of nations ; marking out and controlling that destiny with the same unerring certainty with which the Star of Bethlehem guided the wise men of the East to the lowly cradle of Him who became as man that the children of men might be free.

It can truly be said that it is well for us, upon the annual return of this, our National Anniversary, to hang our banners on the outer wall, to forget all political differences for the time being; sink the partizan in the patriot, and join hands around our country's altar. Here we can ponder over the trials and sacrifices endured by the officers and soldiers of the Continental army who achieved our Independence. We can reflect over the terrible dangers which were incurred by the brave, and good men who framed and adopted the Declaration of Independence which brought forth upon this Continent a new nation, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the idea that all men are created equal.

All nations have had, and now have their national holidays. Greece had her Olympic games ; Rome could degrade her name, tarnish her great achievements, and blacken her pages in the world's history, and desecrate the soil of her country by causing to be poured out the blood of her Gladiators heartlessly butchered, to make a holiday for her people.

The aristocracy of modern Europe can greet with joy the annual return of the day upon which some Prince or Princess was born ; the representative of some dynasty which is sustained in the interest of despotism, which would fetter even tighter with the chains of slavery, the rights of the people, which feeds and fattens upon the substance of that people, and then looks with scorn and contempt, mingled with a self-righteous indignation upon the idea that they are capable of self government. But the celebration of the great anniversary festival of this nation, and of the world, was left in the providence of God, to the children of free America who commemorate, by solemn acts of devotion to God Almighty, this day of deliverance—the most memorable epoch recorded in the annals of the world's history.

John Adams, in his letter of July 3d, 1776, to Mrs. Adams, said “ this day ought to be solemnized with pomp, and parade, with shows, games, sports, guns, balls, bonfires and illuminations from one end of this continent to the other, from this time forward forevermore.”

How well do we continue to fulfil the wish of Mr. Adams, one of the fathers who, four score and fifteen years ago to-day planted in a soil dedicated by God to freedom, the tree of liberty, which in the march of time will shelter the nations of the earth, and beneath the branches of which, all people can seek safety from the pitiless frowns of despotism, and can plant themselves upon the grand principles of our American Declaration of freedom, and defy the power of tyrants and mock to scorn the puny efforts of those who wield the sceptre of power for the aggrandizement of the few, and not so as to confer the blessings of life, liberty and property upon

the many. At the time this tree of liberty was planted by those who were the nation's founders, the soil had already been prepared to receive it, by its being purified by the blood of those patriots of 1776, who had already fallen in the struggle for freedom, and who had preferred death in the face of the foe in defence of human rights, rather than life, with civil degradation, and political slavery. When this declaration was proclaimed, the British Parliament had passed the memorable stamp act. This act, under the influence of such men as Lord Camden, who had declared in the British Parliament that "Taxation and representation were inseparably united; God hath joined them, and no British Parliament could put them asunder," after a short time had been repealed. When this occurred, there was great rejoicing throughout the Colonies, for they thought they saw a disposition manifested by the mother country to harmonize their differences, and they had not even yet been weaned from their old affection for the land of their forefathers, nor had they ceased to glory in the British name. But their joy was of short duration, for in a little more than a year from the repeal of the stamp act, another act was passed by Parliament, imposing duties upon all tin, paper, glass, paints, and lead that should be imported into the Colonies. This was an avowed attempt to raise revenue, though in form, the bill was like other acts, for the regulation of trade, and on this account, it was hoped it would escape censure.

But the principle first advanced by James Otis, was now generally adopted by the Colonies—that revenue bills, under the forms of regulations of trade violated their rights quite as much as direct taxation. Thus the flame of opposition was kindled anew, and raged as hotly as ever. Non-importation was an obvious and legal means of escaping these taxes, and extensive combinations were formed to refrain from the use, not only of the taxed articles, but as far as possible of all other British commodities. Under the influence of this sentiment, the patriots of Massachusetts had made a tea pot of Boston harbor. But little revenue did the British Government

derive from this act. The cause of the Colonies even then found sympathy among those who loved liberty on the Continent of Europe, and even in the British Parliament it was embraced by the great orator and statesman, the elder Pitt, and such lovers of liberty as Conway, and Col. Barri, and Lord Camden. They knew it was not an objection to the payment of the tax that caused resistance on the part of the Colonies, but it was because they claimed all the privileges of British subjects, and especially that of not being taxed without their own consent. In other words, they claimed a voice in making the laws by which they were to be governed. They claimed that God and nature intended they should enjoy the right to liberty as regulated by law.

They asserted the great principle, that man is capable of self government. The colonies had now nothing to expect but war, for they well knew that no grand principle had ever been established until the pathway of its progress had been paved with human bones, and moistened with human blood.

The firing of the king's troops upon the people on Lexington common, April 18, 1775, rang the alarm bell of the revolution. Then the red flames of war shot down their lurid glare from every hillside and mountain top throughout the colonies. The valleys resounded to the tramp of armed men. The first gun in the grand war for liberty had been fired. The plow was left standing in the furrow—the hammer upon the anvil—the plane upon the bench; the lawyer's office was closed; the man of God quit the sacred desk for the field of strife; the merchant left his counter; all hastened to join the armies of the colonies, commanded by Washington, to strike a blow in the good cause in behalf of the right against the tyrant who sought to reduce to a state of vassalage, men who came to America that they might be free. Large British armies were brought across the sea to bring into submission the rebellious subjects of Great Britain, as they were called. In May, 1775, the battle of Bunker Hill was fought. The colonies had tasted of the terrors of war, yet they faltered not.

They felt that God was just, and that justice would yet triumph. They knew the race was not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong; but to the cause which had the happiness and welfare of man upon its side. They knew what liberty meant, for they had already drunk at its fountain, but never did they appreciate its full meaning until its key note was sounded, when their representatives in Congress assembled, proclaimed that the colonies were, and of right ought to be, free and independent among the nations of the earth. When this declaration was signed they gathered new strength; they were inspired with new hopes for the future. They saw for the first time, perhaps, the possibility of a great government where liberty, regulated by law, would be guaranteed to all, even the humblest of its citizens, and where each freeman would wield a weapon more potent than the power of kings,

“A weapon that comes down as still
As snowflakes fall upon the sod,
But executes a freeman's will,
As lightning does the will of God.
And from its force nor doors nor locks
Can shield you! 'tis the ballot box.”

The colonies then had to meet the stern and terrible realities of war. They were beaten by the trained legions of Britain, on many bloody fields, yet they faltered not. Their ranks were thinned by the ravages of war, yet they were none the less hopeful. The sufferings of that continental army can never be described by human tongue nor human pen. Nor was all this suffering and all these sacrifices borne by the fathers of the revolution alone, but our good revolutionary mothers were equal participants in the great struggle for liberty with their fathers, husbands, brothers and sons. One of these mothers had sent six sons to the war, and when news was brought back that two of them had been slain in battle, she replied: “I would rather all had been killed in battle than that one should come back to me a coward.” It will always be so with the women of America. They are ever ready to imitate not only in deeds denoting courage, but also in works indicating charity, the sainted mother of the Savior of the world who stood at His

grave, and when even Apostles trembled and were afraid, she was brave. At the time of this great war for independence, the window sash were made of lead, and our revolutionary mothers took the windows out of their houses and melted the leaden sash and moulded them into bullets for their sons in the continental army. They tore up their garments for bandages, and sent them away to the hospitals. They picked old rags to pieces making lint for the wounded until their finger ends were bleeding. They knit stockings for the suffering heroes who yet rallied around Washington in his winter's camp at Valley Forge, his men barefooted, and leaving their bloody footprints as they walked in the snow, and thinking of the sufferings of these men their eyes were blinded with weeping, and tear-drops fell glistening on their knitting needles. Their souls went out in compassionate sympathy for those suffering heroes who amid the storm, and snow, and ice of a terrible December night, were led by Washington across the Delaware. On bended knees our patriotic revolutionary mothers breathed to the Throne of Grace heart earnest petitions for God's blessing, and protection to the suffering soldier boys in camp or hospital, while the earnest, brave men of that trying period in our history, with "In God we trust," as their motto, kept on hurling manly blows against the cohorts of despotism.

While the men fought, the women prayed and worked, until victory perched upon our standard when General Burgoyne who commanded an army of ten thousand men, and who was instructed to force his way down Lake Champlain, then cross to Albany and descend the Hudson and join the British forces at New York, was cut short in his career by being captured, with his whole army, by General Gates, at Saratoga, in 1777. Here the colonies, with God and right upon their side, humbled in the dust "a power to which, for the purposes of foreign conquest and subjugation, Rome in the height of her glory, is not to be compared, a power which has dotted over the surface of the whole globe with her possessions and military posts, whose morning drum beat, following the sun and keeping company

with the hours, encircles the whole earth with one continuous and unbroken strain of the martial airs of England." Battle after battle was fought until the power of the Briton was broken forever in America by the surrender of Lord Cornwallis, at Yorktown. There the British lion was compelled to take his paw from the pure form of the goddess of American liberty. There the flag of the Briton was forever furled in this country, and in its stead was unfurled "the banner of the free." There the power which had invoked to its aid against those who were but contending for what belonged to them, the tomahawk and scalping knife of the merciless savage, and which called in the assistance of the foreign mercenary, was beaten back, and the sons of liberty then saw the full fruition of all their toils and bloody sacrifices. Then it was shown to the world that he who fought for the right was fighting in a bright field where every sword caught some beams of glory, and every bayonet flashed forth some sentiment of liberty.

Then the world saw that he who fought for freedom, for God, and his native land could overcome him who went to battle beneath the cool and poisonous shade of aristocracy, with no honors to await his daring, his life of danger and hardship, uncheered by hope, and his death unnoticed.

The God of battles at last smiled on the good cause. Great Britain, after seven years of unrelenting warfare, saw that her power was wasted in vain. She had seen her armies, one after another melt away as mist before the morning sun. One defeat after another increased her shame and disaster. She was involved in bloody wars on the Continent of Europe. Negotiations for peace were therefore commenced by her, with the American Commissioners at Paris, and a provisional treaty was signed November 30th, 1782.

This peace came not too soon for exhausted and bleeding America. The people were in a state of the most absolute poverty. The sufferings of the officers and men of the army were great; they saw nothing but penury and want staring them in the face, when they were disbanded and returned to

their homes, made desolate by the ravages of war. There were those ever ready to sow the seeds of discord, and nothing but the firmness, moderation and wisdom of him who was "first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen," saved the nation from ruin. At the close of the war, the Colonies were burdened with a heavy debt, of which they had not the means of even paying the interest; the public credit was annihilated; commerce and manufactories were in a torpid condition, and the country was almost without a Government.

During the greater part of the struggle, Congress had possessed no authority but what was tacitly granted to it, from the necessity of the case. The individual States were unwilling to give up any of that independence which they were striving to vindicate against a foreign power. They claimed complete sovereignty, and were unwilling to appear only as the members of a Confederacy, under the control of a Central Government. In 1777 a plan of union had been framed and adopted in Congress after two years' discussion, not as the best that could be imagined, or as adapted to all exigencies, but as the only one suited to existing circumstances, or at all likely to be adopted. It was not to go into effect until it was ratified by all the States, and only four of them could be induced at first, to adopt it. Slowly and reluctantly the others gave in their adhesion; the consent of New Jersey and Delaware not being obtained till 1779, and that of Maryland, not until 1781, when at last the final sanction of the articles of Confederation as they were called, was joyfully announced by Congress. But the Union thus effected, was very inadequate to the ends in view. It did not establish a Central Government; it was only a league of several independent sovereignties. The Congress of the nation, under this confederation, had no power but to recommend measures—it could not enforce them—and it was left to the States to obey the recommendations or not, at their pleasure. It was a Government of influence, and not of power, if indeed influence can be called government; but it was not one under which

the lives, liberties and property of the governed could be secure. It soon became manifest that it would become necessary to establish a Government capable of exerting more power toward those who might be unwilling to obey its laws. The establishment of our Union by the adoption of that Magna Charta of American Liberty; the Constitution of the United States was the embodiment of that sentiment. Unionism meant a single nation.

The adoption of the Constitution was the establishment of that Unionism, therefore the adoption of the Federal Constitution was the creation of The Nation. This was the object of the fathers when they in their preamble to that instrument declared, "We, the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution of the United States of America." Here the power of the people was recognized; here the fact that this was a "Government of the people, by the people, and for the people, was made manifest." Very many persons at the time of the adoption of the Constitution, objected to it because they believed that it deprived the States of too much power; but when we reflect upon the object of Government, we must conclude, and especially after our experience in this country, that this power was properly lodged in the Government of United States, rather than in those of the States.

Under our present system, we can behold the great dome of the Union rising and expanding to Heaven; extending over all the States, but not resting on them for existence or support. At the time of the treaty of peace between the Colonies and England, the limits of the Republic extended from the great lakes to the 31st degree of latitude, and from the Atlantic to the middle channel of the Mississippi river. Since then, the limits of the Union have been enlarged and fixed by the treaties of cession in 1803 with Napoleon, as first Consul of the

French Republic ; that of 1819 with Spain ; by the admission in 1846 of Texas ; by the treaty of limits of that year with Great Britain, fixing the dividing line between the then Territory of Oregon and the British Possessions ; by the treaties of 1848 and 1853 with Mexico, and the treaty of 1867 with Alexander II, the Emperor of all the Russias. By these treaties of cession the area of the United States of America has been increased eight times its original extent, covering nearly 4,000,000 of square miles of Territory. Much of this Territory was then a howling wilderness, or an unbroken waste, inhabited by wild beasts, and scarcely less savage Indians. But by the energy of American freemen, that wilderness has been made to rejoice, and that unbroken waste to blossom as the rose. No era in the history of the world presents such evidences of the march of empire ; of the material development of a country, and the intellectual, social and moral advancement of its people, as does ours. Truly we have a history that is the very miracle of history. Into our young life, not yet one hundred years long, are crowded a constellation of epochs enough to make resplendent with glory whole centuries of common years. From thirteen States represented by thirteen stars upon our banner, we have increased until the constellation representing the grand sisterhood of States covers the whole of the Heaven-lit blue of that flag. The colonies were weak, and they were looked upon with contempt by the despotisms of Europe.

In the success of our fathers, they saw the success of the people, and they knew right well that that success meant their ultimate downfall. But how the scene has changed ; there is not a power on earth that does not to-day court the favor of the Government of the United States. We are now known and honored throughout the world. There was a time in the history of Rome, when to say "I am a Roman citizen," insured personal liberty and protection throughout the then civilized world ; but he who can now say "I am an American citizen," finds in that sentence a magic power which will protect him all around the Globe.

But a few weeks ago we saw exhibited on a foreign soil the respect foreign nations have for our prowess. When Paris was in flames; when a bloody, relentless mob inaugurated a carnival of blood, and surged through the streets, sparing neither sex, age nor condition; becoming wild with rage and drunken with the blood of its victims, it surged along until it reached the residence of the American minister. It saw floating in the breeze above that residence, the stars and stripes of our country's banner. There it streamed "full high aloft with not a stripe erased nor a star obscured," and amid the screams of the murdered victims and the infuriated yells of the mob which rolled the bloody waves of desolation and murder to the very walls of that residence, a still small voice whispered to that mob, "By this sign I seek protection," and it fell back in dismay, filled with admiration, even while it sought fresh victims and reveled amid its bloody orgies, for the mighty nation beyond the waters of the deep blue sea, where every citizen is a freeman in the full enjoyment of liberty as regulated by law, and whether he stands beneath his own roof tree, upon his own soil, or in a foreign land, or upon the deck of an American vessel, all he has to do is to invoke the aid of that banner, and forty millions of American freemen with the principles of personal liberty firmly fixed in their minds and firmly imbedded in their hearts, are ready to rush to his rescue and throw around him a panoply of protection which no nation in this age can penetrate. Truly, we can now say,

"Where breathes the foe but falls before us,
With freedom's soil beneath our feet and freedom's banner streaming
o'er us."

It is useless for me to dwell upon our progress as a nation, because it is written upon every page of our history; it is manifest in every thing we see around us. The confines of civilization have step by step moved westward, crossing great rivers and vast prairies and plains, and dense forests, and ascending mighty mountains until it planted the church and the school house, the warp and woof of our American Union, upon

the golden sands of the Pacific slope, and sent our messengers of commerce, spreading their white wings on old ocean's bosom, bearing our civilization far away to Asia, telling the people of that land that there is a land beyond the sea, where every man is free.

Forty years ago there was not a railroad in the United States. Now these arteries of commerce penetrate the whole body of the nation, binding it together more closely with bands of iron. Twenty-five years ago there was not a telegraph line in the United States, but since that time we have spanned old ocean and girdled the whole earth with the tamed lightnings of heaven, thus bringing all nations together, and more directly under the influence of that power which is the grand seat of liberty, the United States of America, and teaching all nations that sentiment in which we believe, which was contained in the declaration thundered forth from amidst Mar's hills by Paul, when he said, "of one blood are all nations created to dwell on the face of the earth forever." Great cities have sprung up everywhere over this bright and beautiful land. Prosperous villages are now dotted over it like the stars in the heavens. Its valleys and mountain slopes are covered with the homes of freemen. Now

"Toil swings the ax, and forests bow;
The fields break out in radiant bloom.
Rich harvests smile behind the plow,
And cities cluster 'round the loom."

Yet by all this progress, and all this prosperity, the justice of God could not be turned aside. Our fathers sinned in permitting slavery to remain in a government whose corner stone was human freedom. It was somewhat anomalous for them to go to war for the principle that all men are created free and equal, and then bring into existence a government that tolerated, or indirectly recognized the most accursed system of human bondage ever devised by man's cruelty. Perhaps they could not do otherwise. They had to make concessions to each other to secure unity and harmony among the colonies. They knew it was an evil, having in its train all the crimes,

woes, and miseries that were ever inflicted upon man. Yet they hoped to see it placed in course of ultimate extinction by the colonies themselves. But God is just, and he punishes the sins of nations as well as of men, and we had to wipe out this stain upon our national escutcheon in blood. Slavery begot aristocracy, a contempt for labor, a disregard for the rights of others, and a desire to destroy the government. That desire culminated when the rebellion burst upon the land in 1861. Then came the final great test to our institutions.

What patriot can ever forget what he felt when the news came over the wires that the hand of treason against our common country had struck yonder bright banner from the walls of Fort Sumpter? Can we ever forget the great uprising of the loyal nation; party distinctions forgotten; party sunk in patriotism? When the great and good Lincoln called for troops, and the deep toned voice of the mighty Douglas resounded through the land, declaring "that he who was not for his country in such an hour, was against his country;" and all the loyal people resolved that the stars and stripes should again float over Fort Sumpter; aye, should greet the morning sunlight and kiss the last rays of the setting sun, not only above the brick and mortar of Sumpter, but from the Kennebec to the Rio Grande, from lake Superior to the gulf of Mexico, the symbol of liberty, the shield and protection of American citizenship.

We remember when war meetings were held in our little country school houses, when the prairies were all alive with patriotic ardor; and the fife and drum were beating up recruits in the streets of our towns and cities. Yes, we remember all this. Wait until we are old men and women, and we will remember these scenes even better than now, and around our firesides we will tell our children how a free people, their own rulers, living in a government of their own, with a common impulse, rallied to their country's defense, in the hour of her dire need.

It was grand! Something to be remembered always—to

be proud of always. The rebellion passed over this fair land, leaving its mark on each brow, its shadow in each household; but, thank God, when the cohorts of liberty prevailed, they eliminated the curse of slavery from our system. They raised every man to the dignity of a freeman. They planted that bright, triumphant banner of liberty on every foot of American soil. They established forever, if we are but true to our ancestry, to ourselves and to posterity, the perpetuity of our institutions. They said our great rivers, in all their long, majestic course to the sea, should pass through but one country. They said our ocean bounds should be but the boundries of one nation. Their deeds have made us truly one people, one nation, with one government, one system of laws, one and the same country, bound together by a common interest, a common ancestry, and united, as I trust we are to be, when the scars of the rebellion shall have healed, by the silver cords of love and affection for each other. We worship the same God, according to the dictates of our own conscience. We ought to be all seeking the one common end—the happiness of our people and the greatness and glory of our land. The down-trodden of every race have an interest in us. The oppressed of Ireland look upon our flag as they see it streaming from the masthead of some merchantman in their harbors across the sea, and sigh for a home in the bright land of hope that sends forth that banner. The oppressed of England, looking upon it, remember the pilgrim fathers flying from English tyranny to plant that banner beyond blue ocean's wintry waves, and wish the liberty that banner guarantees may be theirs too. The Italian refugee hails it in a foreign port, and breathes a prayer that the flag of Italy may sometime insure to Italians that liberty which the flag of America guarantees to Americans.

The liberty loving German, loving liberty for himself, and all the world beside, who loaned us money by buying our bonds in the dark days of treason, now points to our banner as the fulfillment of his prophecy, that those who fight for liberty will win the battle. The poor Frenchman, when he

looks around him and beholds the ruin and desolation of his fair vine-clad France, ruined by that despotism which has hurled its curses upon the people from a French throne, remembers La Fayette, looks upon our bright banner and hopes his France will some day yet be free. The lovers of liberty in Spain point to our banner, and shout for a Government like ours.

And the people of Canada, and of Cuba—the queen of the Antillas, standing away out amid the dashing waves of the Atlantic, and San Domingo and all the Islands on the American Continent are even now wishing for the time when they can call our flag their own. And who shall hinder them? Who shall stand in the way of the march of our manifest destiny? Who shall be so unreasonable as to say these countries and these islands which are even now either trembling within the grasp of monarchs, or being crushed out by the heel of despotism, you shall not become a part of us? I trust none.

Ten long years have passed since the second war in this land waged for the rights of freemen burst upon the country, and those ten years are crowded full of the most glorious memories of our national life, and the most touching, sweetest and saddest memories that our hearts cherish. The dead are gathered to their long homes. We kneel by their graves and utter a prayer for their spirits fled. We plant above their clay the willow and the laurel, and we feel that blood like this

“ For liberty shed so holy is
 It would not stain the purest rill,
 That sparkles among the bowers of bliss.
 Oh! if there be on this earthly sphere
 A boon, an offering Heaven holds dear,
 'Tis the last libation liberty draws
 From the heart that bleeds, and breaks in her cause.”

We, as citizens of this Republic must not forget that we have duties to perform—solemn, high, imperative duties. We must bear in mind that eternal vigilance is the price of liberty. We must remain as faithful sentinels on the watch tower of freedom, guarding well the portals of liberty, ever bearing in mind that

“ Freedom's battles once begun,
 Bequeathed by bleeding sire to son,
 Though baffled oft, is ever won.”

We must keep before us the sacrifices of life, and blood, and treasure made by our ancestors when they laid broad and deep the foundations of our Government. We must not forget the noble deeds performed by the fair women and brave men for the defense of the Nation during the last great struggle for its existence, remembering

“That four hundred thousand men,
The brave, the good, the true,
In tangled wood, in mountain glen
On battle plain and in prison pen,
Lie dead for me and you.”

That there are thousands upon thousands of weeping Rachels and mourning Jacobs who are only comforted because their sons died for the nation. We have but to do our duty as well as the friends of the Government have performed theirs in the past, and as well as those who braved the terrors of the battle field in its defense in our day, and our career of glory and greatness is but in its infancy.

There are even yet dangers which beset our national pathway. They can be avoided by a correct and faithful performance of our duty; by vigilant and watchful care on the part of all good citizens.

Then let us retire from the celebration of this, our ninety-fifth national birthday with renewed faith in our institutions, with a firm determination on our part that let come what will, no traitor hand shall ever again be laid upon the Government which protects all alike; which secures liberty to all, no matter whether it be the opulent and powerful, or the poor and lowly. That the mailed hand of power wielded by the whole American people will drag to justice any who may in the future dare to strike at the existence of the nation. Let us resolve to hasten that day when the nations “shall learn war no more,” when the battle flags shall be furled; when the sword shall be beaten into the scythe, and the cannon shall become the plowshare; when the universal brotherhood of man shall be proclaimed and recognized everywhere; when peace on earth and good will to men shall be the watchword among the nations; when

“All crime shall cease and ancient fraud shall fail,
Returning justice lift aloft her scale,
Peace over the world her olive wand extend,
And white robed innocence from heaven descend.”

When the universal world shall come to know that it cannot escape, if it would, obedience to the command of Him who hath said: “Proclaim liberty throughout all the land, and unto all the inhabitants thereof.”









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